52013/CAB/A400

PETUNIA PLANT NAMED 'SUNPURPLE'

BOTANICAL~~/COMMERCIAL~~ CLASSIFICATION

Petunia hybrida~~/Petunia Plant~~

VARIETAL DENOMINATION

~~cv.~~ 'Sunpurple'

BACKGROUND OF THE VARIETY

The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of Petunia plant, which originated from crossing a seedling of a Petunia variety called 'Red Madness' (unpatented) as the female parent and a Petunia wild species called '70-200' (unpatented) as the male parent.

The Petunia is a very popular plant that is used for flower bedding and potting in the summer season. There are only a few Petunia varieties ~~which~~that do not have an upright growth habit and ~~which~~that have a high resistance to rain, heat, and diseases. The Petunia plants such as ~~'Revolution'~~REVOLUTION series, 'Revolution Purple pink' (U.S. Plant ~~Pat.~~Patent No. 6,915), 'Revolution Brilliant pink' (U.S. Plant ~~Pat.~~Patent No. 6,914), 'Revolution Brilliantpink-Mini' (U.S. Plant ~~Pat.~~Patent No. 6,899), and 'Revolution Blue vein' (U.S. Plant ~~Pat.~~Patent No. 9,322) are decumbent type plants having long stems, a lower plant height, abundant branching, and a high resistance to heat, rain and diseases. However, there are only a few Petunia varieties having a decumbent plant shape, a great profusion of flowers, vivid reddish purple petals and a high resistance to rain, heat, and diseases. Accordingly, this invention was aimed at obtaining a new variety having vivid reddish purple petals together with the above features.

~~Progress~~

The female parent 'Red Madness' used in the crossing ~~of~~

to produce 'Sunpurple' is a cultivar[[,]] having compact and spreading growth habit with medium size single flowers, the petals having a strong red color~~. The seed of 'Red Madness' was bought from Ball Seed Corporation~~.

The male parent '70-200' used in the crossing ~~of~~to produce 'Sunpurple' is a strain of wild Petunia species ~~grown at Omi R&D Center, Suntory Flowers Ltd,~~ having decumbent growth habit with much branching. It has small size single flowers, the petals having vivid reddish purple color.

In April 2000, crossing of 'Red Madness' as the female parent and '70-200' as the pollen parent was conducted at Yokaichi, Shiga, Japan~~the Omi R&D Center, Suntory Flowers Ltd~~. In August 2000, 80 seedlings were obtained from that crossing. These seedlings were grown in pots in glasshouses and were evaluated. One seedling was selected in view of its growth habit, flower size and color in October 2000. That seedling was propagated by cuttings and a trial was carried out by flower potting and bedding from April to September 2001~~, at the Omi R&D Center, Suntory Flowers Ltd~~. The botanical characteristics of that plant were then examined, using similar varieties 'Sunripami' (unpatented) and 'Sunrovein' (U.S. Plant Patent Application Serial No. 10/789,408) for comparison. As a result, it was concluded that this Petunia plant is distinguishable from any other variety, whose existence is known to us, and uniform and stable in its characteristics. The instant plant reproduces true to type in successive generations of asexual reproduction. ~~Then t~~he new variety of Petunia plant was named 'Sunpurple'.

In the following description, the color-~~cording~~coding is in accordance with the ~~Horticultural~~ Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society, London, England (R.H.S. ~~Colour Chart~~).

SUMMARY OF THE VARIETY

This new variety is unlike any Petunia commercially

available variety known to the inventors, as evidenced by the following unique combinations of characteristics.

1. Decumbent growth habit with long stems.

2. ~~Having a~~Abundant branching and great profusion of blooms.

3. The flowers are single and medium size. The petal color is vivid reddish purple (near R.H.S. N74A).

4. The plant has a high resistance to cold, heat, rain and diseases.

The new variety 'Sunpurple' differs from the similar variety 'Sunripami' in the following points.

1. The leaf of 'Sunpurple' is longer than that of 'Sunripami'.

2. The leaf of 'Sunpurple' is thinner than that of 'Sunripami'.

3. The flower of 'Sunpurple' is larger than that of 'Sunripami'.

4. The bottom color of the corolla throat of 'Sunpurple' is deep reddish purple (near R.H.S. 72A), while t~~T~~hat of 'Sunripami' is moderate purple (near R.H.S. 83B).

5. The outside color of the corolla throat of 'Sunpurple' is deep reddish purple (near R.H.S. N79B), while t~~T~~hat of 'Sunripami' is strong purple (near R.H.S. 83D).

6. The apex shape of the petal ~~chip~~tip of 'Sunpurple' is obtuse. That of 'Sunripami' is rounded.

7. The flowering time of 'Sunpurple' is later than that of 'Sunripami'.

The new variety 'Sunpurple' differs from the similar variety 'Sunrovein' in the following points.

1. The plant height of 'Sunpurple' is lower than that of 'Sunrovein'.

2. The leaf of 'Sunpurple' is longer than that of

'Sunrovein'.

3. The leaf of 'Sunpurple' is thinner than that of 'Sunrovein'.

4. The petal color of 'Sunpurple' is vivid reddish purple (near R.H.S. N74A), while t~~T~~hat of 'Sunrovein' is vivid purplish red (near R.H.S. 71B) with deep purplish red (near R.H.S. 71A) vein.

5. The bottom color of the corolla throat of 'Sunpurple' is deep reddish purple (near R.H.S. 72A), while t~~T~~hat of 'Sunrovein' is moderate purplish red (near R.H.S. 64A).

6. The outside color of the corolla throat is deep reddish purple (near R.H.S. N79B), while t~~T~~hat of 'Sunrovein' is light purplish pink (near R.H.S. 62C).

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH

The depicted plants had been ~~re~~produced by the use of cuttings and were photographed during July 2003 at an age of approximately 6 months while growing outdoors in 15 cm pots ~~at an age of approximately 6 months~~ at Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan, under typical outdoor conditions for that region.

FIG. 1 is a photograph of a typical plant of the new variety of Petunia plant 'Sunpurple'.

FIG. 2 is a photograph of flowers and leaves of the new variety of Petunia plant 'Sunpurple'.

DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIETY

The botanical characteristics of the new and distinct variety of Petunia plant named 'Sunpurple' at an age of 4 months, at Yokaichi, Shiga, Japan, are as follows.

Plant:

Growth habit. - Decumbent.

Plant height. - Approximately 12.3 cm.

Spreading area of plant. - Approximately 33.2 cm.

Blooming period. - April to late October in the southern Kanto area, Japan. The plant shape does not change throughout this period. A typical flower commonly lasts approximately 5 days on the plant when experiencing a temperature of approximately 20°C.

Stem:

Length. - Approximately 30 cm.

Thickness. - Approximately 2.5 mm.

Pubescence. - ~~Normal~~Present and typical for the species.

Branching. - Abundant.

Internode length. - Approximately 2.2 cm.

Color. - Near R.H.S. 144A (strong yellow green).

Leaf:

Whole shape. - Elliptic. The apex shape is acute, and the base shape is attenuate.

Margin. - Entire.

Length. - Approximately 6.4 cm.

Width.- Approximately 3.5 cm.

Color.- Upper side color is near R.H.S. 144A (strong yellow green). Bottom side color is near R.H.S. 146C (moderate olive green).

Thickness. - Approximately 0.2 mm.

Pubescence. - Sparse.

Petiole: (Indistinct)

Length. - Approximately 3.0 mm.

Diameter - Approximately 1.0 mm.

Color. - Near R.H.S. 144B.

Buds:

Shape. - Cylindrical.

Length. - Approximately 4.5 cm.

Diameter. - Approximately 7.0 mm.

Color. - Toward apex, Near R.H.S. N77B; base, near R.H.S. N79B; venation, near R.H.S. N92A.

Flower:

Facing direction. - Slanted upward.

Type. - Single.

Shape. - Funnel-shape, with five-fissured limb.

~~Shape of petal chip. - Obtuse.~~

~~Lobation. - Medium.~~

~~Waving of petal. - Medium.~~

Diameter. - Approximately 7.4 cm.

Depth. - Approximately 5.8 cm.

Throat diameter. - Distal end, approximately 1.5 cm.

Tube Diameter. - Proximal end, approximately 4.0 mm.

Petals:

Whole shape. - Very broadly obtrullate.

Apex shape. - Obtuse.

Width. - Approximately 4.0 cm.

Length. (from the throat). - Approximately 3.5 cm.

Margin. - Entire, undulated.

Color. - Upper side of the petal, near R.H.S. N74A; underside of the petal, near R.H.S. N78A with near N92A venation.

Upper color of the corolla throat. - Near R.H.S. N90B with N92A venation.

Bottom color of the corolla throat. - Near R.H.S. 72A.

Outside color of corolla tube. - Near R.H.S. N79B.

~~Color. - Petal; R.H.S. N74A (vivid reddish purple). Bottom color of the corolla throat; R.H.S. 72A (deep reddish purple). Outside color of the corolla tube; R.H.S. N79B (deep reddish purple).~~

Reproductive organs. - 1 normal pistil and 5 normal stamens. Color of pistil is near R.H.S. 150C (light yellow green). Color of stamen is near R.H.S. 157C (light yellow green).

Peduncle. - Approximately 1.3 mm in diameter and approximately

1.9 cm in length.

Color. - Near R.H.S. 144B.

Surface. - Pubescent.

Calyx. - Medium. 5 sepals ~~in~~ fused at the base.

Sepals:

Shape. - Narrow elliptic.

Apex shape. - Rounded.

Base. - Fused.

Margin. - Entire, undulated.

Surface. - Pubescent.

Length. - Approximately 2.5 cm.

Width. - Approximately 6.0 mm.

Color. - Upper surface, near R.H.S. 144A; lower surface, toward apex, near R.H.S. 144A; base, near R.H.S. N77A.

Physiological and ecological characteristics.- High resistance to cold, heat, rain and diseases. Moderate resistance to pests.

This new variety of Petunia plant is most suitable for flower bedding and potting, particularly in hanging pots or planters, and is excellent for use as ground cover. Pinching of old blossoms will enhance the formation of new blossoms.

~~It is claimed~~We claim:

A new and distinct variety of Petunia plant named 'Sunpurple', substantially as herein illustrated and described.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Disclosed herein is a new and distinct variety of Petunia plant named 'Sunpurple' having a decumbent growth habit and long stems. ~~The Petunia plant~~'Sunpurple' has abundant branching, and great profusion of blooms, the whole plant remaining in bloom for a considerable period of time. The flowers are single and medium size, the petals having vivid reddish purple color. The bottom and the outside color of the corolla throat is deep reddish purple. The plant exhibits high resistance to heat, cold, rain and diseases.

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